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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
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09/574,277 05/19/00 MULLER

K 502-009444-U

EXAMINER

MM71/0828

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FAIRFIELD CT 06430

HARVEY, J ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2833
DATE MAILED:

08/28/01

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

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Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/574,277

Applicant(s)

MULLER, KLAUS

Examiner

James R. Harvey

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on amendment dated 5-31-01.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 3 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 4 and 5 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2 and 6-9 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 31 May 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

- The drawing amendments dated 5-31-01 have been approved by the examiner.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

- The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

- Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Shuey et al. (4,477,022).
 - a. In reference to claim 1, Shuey shows an electrical plug connectors with a cylindrical plug (38), a counter-plug (98) which is complementary to plug (38), a bayonet ring (82) which is rotatable about the housing (64; column 3, lines 22-25) of the counter-plug (98) for locking the plug (38) into the counter-plug (98), characterized by the fact that the bayonet ring (82) for the locking of the plug connector in the direction of plug insertion can be pushed onto the housing (16) of the plug (38) until at least one locking device of the bayonet ring (82) interlocks with the plug housing (16) and that the bayonet ring (82) for the unlocking of the plug connector can be rotated about the counter-plug housing (64).
- Claims 4 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shuey et al. (4,477,022), in view of Clark et al. (5,913,691).
 - a. In reference to claim 4, Shuey shows substantially all the elements of the claim. However, Shuey does not show that the bayonet ring has at least one outward-pointing pin and

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that the plug housing has at least one lever arm which can be rotated vertically to the direction of plug to grip the pin.

Clark shows an outward-pointing pin (35) and that the plug housing has at least one lever arm (44) which can be rotated vertically to the direction of plug to grip the pin (35).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the pin and lever arrangement of Clark to improve Shuey's connector arrangement because the lever and pin arrangement requires less physical or mechanical energy (strength) to clamp the connectors together.

b. In reference to claim 5, Shuey shows substantially all the elements of the claim.

However, Shuey does not show the bayonet ring has two diametrically opposite pins and that the plug housing has two diametrically opposite L-shaped lever arms which are linked together by a substantively semi-cylindrical C-strap.

Clark shows the connector arrangement has two diametrically opposite pins (35; figure 4) and that the plug housing has two diametrically opposite L-shaped lever arms (44) which are linked together by a strap 47.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the pin and lever arrangement of Clark to improve Shuey's connector arrangement because the lever and pin arrangement requires less physical or mechanical energy (strength) to clamp the connectors together.

c. However, neither Clark or Shuey show a semi-cylindrical C-strap. It would have been obvious matter of design choice to have the strap in a semi-cylindrical shape, since such a modification would have involved a mere change in the shape of a component. A change in

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shape is generally recognized as being within the level of ordinary skill in the art. *In re Daily*, 149 USPQ 47 (CCPA 1976).

Response to Arguments

- In response to applicant's argument of the rejection of claim 1 concerning the inability to push the metal ring of Shuey over the threads, it is true that the ring must be rotated. However, rotation alone will not cause the metal ring to contact the threads. The metal ring must first be pushed in the plug insertion direction onto the housing until the locking device (threads) of the ring interlocks with the housing.
- In response to applicant's argument concerning claims 4 and 5, applicant's arguments fail to comply with 37 CFR 1.111(b) because they amount to a general allegation that the claims define a patentable invention without specifically pointing out how the language of the claims patentably distinguishes them from the references.

Allowable Subject Matter

- Claim 3 is allowed.
- Claim 2 and 6-9 objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

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- The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: Applicants arguments were convincing in pointing out that the prior art does not disclose spring tongues molded on the bayonet ring and a collar that can be pushed forward or backward and is arranged about the plug housing.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

- Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a).

Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

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- Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James R. Harvey whose telephone number is 703-305-0958. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00 A.M. To 5:00 P.M.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paula A. Bradley can be reached on 703-308-2319. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-305-7724 for regular communications and 703-308-7722 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0952.

James R. Harvey, Examiner

jrh
August 23, 2001

